

Chair Vija Vilcins
Vice Chair Kathy Aitken
Secretary Paula Traquair
Treasurer Ron Roffey



President Nicolas Bevan
Vice President Joyce Snipp
Vice President Jillian Smith

Charlton & Blackheath
Amateur Horticultural Society
Founded 1950

www.cabahs.wordpress.com

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2020
Grow Friends, Grow Fit ... Grow a Garden!

Although it has been a difficult year in so many ways, the Committee hopes you have enjoyed the talks and activities that we have been able to offer. Despite our lack of opportunity to come together for our regular monthly meetings, our membership has continued to increase; we now have 142 members. Some of these people have joined through their engagement with the Old Pond Garden project and some have found us through our presence on social media.

Our presentation this month on Monday November 16th is from Twigs Way and Kathy has given details of this in her Round Robin email. I have seen Twigs Way give talks on several occasions, but this will be the first time the subject has been plants themselves! No doubt this will be as fascinating as the others - she is a terrific speaker!

For those of you who do not check the CABAHS website regularly, there are some lovely entries in the Members' Gardens section: Viv's project to create a garden in her new home provides an opportunity to have a look at her planting even if you were not able to visit in August. And the Blog has a wonderful celebration of Remembrance Day from Sian, including a poem from Elizabeth's great granddaughter.

We have not been able to celebrate our anniversary as we had intended this year. However, the bench we planned to commemorate 70 years of CABAHS has now been installed in the Old Pond Garden at Charlton House.



My salad seedlings (Anna's September challenge) have now pulled themselves together and put on some growth and I have turned them out of their seed trays and into terracotta pots of compost for the winter.

(I don't actually transplant or prick these out - I simply turn the tray upside down and drop the contents onto the compost in the pot and then fill up around the edges). It looks as though I should have some good salad leaves to keep me going for a while at least.



Anna's Challenge

Anna's latest challenge is to take cuttings from all the Salvias in your garden, as insurance against a cold/wet winter when you might lose them. In theory you can never have too many Salvias, but if you do, you can always swap them with other members.

Committee

Very regretfully, I have to announce that Jenny, who organises our speakers and has done such a tremendous job for us, is resigning from the Committee. Members will continue to see her helping out at meetings, but she is a great loss to the work of the Committee. We now very much need some new members to come forward to help us with our work, in particular people who are comfortable and confident (but not necessarily expert) with social media, someone to deal with membership and, of course, a replacement for Jenny. If you feel you can make a contribution to our organisation, please contact either Kathy or myself.

Gardening notes

- **The Gardens Trust** is running a series of talks on "Unforgettable Gardens", the next one is on Nov 17th at 10am on York Gate and then one on Strawberry Hill on Nov 24th. Tickets £5 each.
- The **Garden Museum** is hosting a film about Sissinghurst, Nov 19th 6pm, from writer Tim Richardson, £5.
- In anticipation of the **Garden Museum's** forthcoming exhibition on Constance Spry (now to begin in 2021) the Museum is holding a talk by curator Shane Connolly looking at her approach to gardens and flowers on 8 December, 6.30-7.30. Tickets £25. This will take place at the Museum and online.
- The **Garden Masterclass** host a series of online lectures, booking is essential, check their website for information.
 - *150 Years of the Wild Garden* - William Robinson's *The Wild Garden*, first published 150 years ago, is considered one of the most influential horticultural books published. Head Gardener Tom Coward will discuss the work involved in developing William Robinson's wild garden, 150 years after its conception, as well as the effect that the book continues to have on landscapes today. Wednesday, December 2nd, 18.00-19.00.
 - *'Five design principles for seasonal planting at Chanticleer'* - Dan Benarcik has spent the last 28 years creating and implementing seasonal displays within the courtyard gardens at Chanticleer. Tuesday 18 December 18.00-19.00. £24.
- **Books:** For those of you who like a good gardening book, Monty Don's '*American Gardens*', (with photographs by Derry Moore) based on the television series is published by Prestel, £35. Perhaps one for the Christmas wishlist? And continuing the theme of gardens and wellbeing, Dr. Katie Cooper shares her research on the role of indoor plants in '*Plant Therapy*', published by Hardie Grant Books, £16.99.

- The **London Gardens Trust Blog** (simply enter the name in your browser search bar) has a fascinating entry on Downham in South East London, looking at the history and development of the area, which was all open countryside until WW1.

Do check out our website for further activities to get involved in.

Pat's 10 jobs for November

1. Remove leaves from unnetted ponds as soon as possible to avoid the water becoming polluted.
2. Plant tulips now either in the ground or in pots but do cover with armour in the form of netting, chicken wire and metal grids if available weighted down with stones or bricks. While I was planting mine the squirrels were swinging from the trees behind my garden watching me. Gravel and planting with violas don't work for me as they can still smell the bulbs!
3. Leave flowerheads of grasses such as Miscanthus and perennials like Pontederia to provide winter structure and for wildlife food and shelter.
4. Cut back Penstemons by about a third to leave some stems for frost protection and then prune thoroughly in spring when frosts are over.
5. Cut back roses by about a third to prevent wind rock during the winter and mulch plants with whatever you have to hand e.g. compost, leaf mould. You can then complete pruning during late winter. I have a hybrid musk rose called Penelope which had become huge and was leaning forward but has fully recovered after a very severe prune in early spring.
6. If you want early Hellebore flowers, cloche some now for those early flowers.
7. In the veg garden sow winter hardy broad beans which are perfect for autumn sowing and will provide an early harvest next spring.
8. Remove and clean stakes and canes as crops finish and store in the dry for the winter.
9. Clean out birdboxes of old nesting material to provide winter roosts in bad weather for birds.
10. Finally, walk round the garden this month and make a list of all the jobs that will need doing in the spring for next year including splitting clumps that have outgrown their space and maybe replacing poor performers. I've kept a book for the last 12 years although not all the jobs get done but your garden will look a very different place in the spring when it may be too late to change things.

And just to note: Tim Shepherd, who you will remember won the potato competition, has suggested that we donate his prize (a bumper pack of potato crisps) to the Greenwich food bank! It will be done.

Our first meeting of 2021 will be on 18th January with a talk from Graham Blunt of Plantbase on exotic plants. Graham also gives podcasts, so if we are still restricted due to the pandemic he will be able to offer this using Zoom.

This year has been a year of doing things differently and so we continue into December! For the first time, we will produce a Newsletter for the last month of the year. In readiness, we invite members to:

- I. Send in a photograph of their front door with Christmas wreath - this may be hand-made or shop bought. These will go onto the website, but the best one will be in the Newsletter;
- II. Send in a photograph of the best plants in flower in your garden now. Again, these will go onto the website, but the best one(s) will be in the Newsletter;
- III. Send in a Christmas cracker joke - the best ones will be featured in the Newsletter.

Happy gardening all and take care!

Contact us on: cabahshortisoc@gmail.com

